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ARGUMENT OF URGENCY OF AQUATONE COVERAGE

1. In a military sense, United States national security is dependent in large measure on the security of the Continental United States from nuclear devastation and the maintenance of a net capability to deliver nuclear blows on the USSR. Recent Soviet achievements in ICBM and earth satellite development indicate that the state of the art in missiles is highly advanced in the USSR. AQUATONE coverage of Soviet missile test ranges indicates that the present scope and future growth potential of the Soviet missile program represents, in the words of the GMIC Scientific Advisory Panel, an "immediate and continuing peril" to United States national security. National estimates of Soviet achievement of an operational ICBM launch capability of ten missiles has been estimated for mid-1958-1959 with a total capability of 500 ICBMs attainable during mid-1960-1962.

2. Until the ICBM capability reaches the sizeable portions indicated for 1960, it is presumed that long range heavy bombers and submarines equipped with guided missile launchers would constitute the major Soviet weapons systems for delivery of nuclear weapons against the Continental United States. Evidence on Soviet heavy bomber production and deployment has suggested that the USSR has devoted only a limited effort in this field. This suggestion is not conclusive primarily because of lack of intelligence coverage of sites such as aircraft, plants, and certain bomber bases which if covered would resolve uncertainties regarding heavy bomber production. An associated question outstanding is the possibility of a new generation of Soviet heavy bombers replacing the BISON and BEAR. (AQUATONE coverage of 1956 contributed to firming up United States estimates of Soviet medium bomber strength, but this vehicle has not been employed systematically as yet on outstanding targets of heavy bomber intelligence significance.) It may also be presumed that Soviet submarines equipped with guided missiles will provide delivery vehicles for nuclear weapons launched against the United States not only until 1960 but also after that as an auxiliary weapon to ICBM operations.

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2

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SC-00399/58
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3. Photographic coverage by AQUATONE of the listed targets has a good chance of revealing highly critical information relative to the current operational status and deployment of Soviet IRBMs and ICBMs. Evidence from AQUATONE [REDACTED] to date indicates the Soviets are well advanced in short (75-300 NM), mid (650-950 NM), and long range (3,500-5,000 NM) missiles. Analysis by United States experts of these data indicates that the Soviet guided missile program is probably such that;

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- a. Short range missiles are now in the hands of troops and are operationally deployed;
- b. IRBM missiles are being provided for operational deployment; and
- c. ICBM missiles are in the mid or late stage of prototype testing and, with some modification, could be used operationally in March 1958.

Analysis of data has also suggested that the Soviet IRBM and ICBM program is far enough along for operational bases to be either constructed, in the case of the former, or under construction, in the case of the latter.

4. It may be pertinent to point out here that a recent study of the Intelligence Advisory Committee Subcommittee concerned with assessing the problem of determining location of Soviet ICBM sites has determined that these sites are most likely to be found while in the construction stage. The Intelligence Advisory Committee Subcommittee also pointed out that the likelihood of finding launch sites by means other than aerial reconnaissance is low to negligible. Because of our current knowledge of the Soviet guided missile program derived principally from AQUATONE [REDACTED] to date along with our deductions from recent satellite launchings, it appears imperative that an aggressive reconnaissance program be initiated to determine the location of IRBM and ICBM launch sites as well as another look with higher resolution camera at the research and development establishment located at KAPUSTIN YAR and TYURA TAM.

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5. It is our strong belief that coverage of the highest priority targets recommended in this paper (principally Areas 1, 3, and 11) would constitute most likely exploration of launch sites.

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3

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